

Message Text

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ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 H-03 SSO-00 /011 W

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R 221536Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9826

UNCLAS BUCHAREST 3750

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CDES, RO (SCHRUMPF, JACK)

SUBJECT: DISPOSITION OF REMAINS

REF: BUCHAREST 3672

1. CONSULAR OFFICER HAD A CONVERSATION WITH STRATTION, COORDINATOR FOR AMBASSADORS FOR FREINDSHIP, ON AUGUST 21, DURING WHICH TIME THE FOLOWING POINTS WERE CLEARED UP:
A. MEMBERS OF THE GROUP CONTRIBUTED AMERICAN DOLLARS (AMOUNT UNKNOWN) WHICH WERE CONVERTED BY ONT REP TAMIS INTO 5,000 ROMANIAN LEI. OF THIS SUM, STRATTON HAS IN HIS POSSESSION 1,800 LEI. HE CLAIMS TAMIS HAS RECEIPTS FOR THE 3,200 LEI SPENT ON PREPARATIONS FOR SHIPPING THE REMAINS, INCLUDING PURCHASE OF CASKET AND COFFIN WHICH WERE UNUSABLE FOR SHIPPING. STRATTON IS SEEKING A REFUND ON THESE ITEMS.

B. STRATTON ADVISED THAT A TELEPHONE CALL WAS PLACED TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY DURING THE MORNING OF AUGUST 11 BUT THE CALL DID NOT GET THROUGH. HE PLACED THE SECOND CALL "JUST BEFORE SEVEN O'CLOCK, (IN THE EVENING) TALKED TO THE MARINE GUARD, AND LEF THE MESSAGE REPORTED IN PARAGRAPH (1)(A) REFTEL.

C. COMPLAINT ABOUT CONSULAR OFFICER REFUSING TO TRAVEL TO SIGN THE PAPERS SHOULD HAVE STATED THE CONSULAR OFFICER RUFUSED TO "GO TO THE AIRPORT TO SIGN THE PAPERS". TRUE. THE CHARTER PLANE HAD A TWO-HOUR LAYOVER IN BUCHAREST, FROM APPROXIMATELY 3 A.M. TO 5 A.M. AT THE TIME OF REFUSAL THE CONSULAR OFFICER WAS ALREADY AWARE THAT THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS WERE NOT AND WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE IN TIME FOR THE BODY TO BE SHIPPED ON THE CHARTER FLIGHT. THIS INFORMA-
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TION WAS GIVEN TO MR. STRATTON WHO UNDERSTOOD THE SITUATION.

HE IN TURN ATTEMPTED TO EXPLAIN TO MR. MULL, THE GROUP LEADER OF THE OHIO VALLEY CHORALE GROUP. FYI: AT NO TIME DURING AUGUST 11 OR AUGUST 12 DID MR. STRATTON SPEAK DIRECTLY WITH MRS. SCHRUMPF. ALL HIS DEALINGS ON THIS CASE WERE THROUGH MR. MULL. AT THE SAME TIME THE CONSULAR OFFICER HAD DIRECT CONTACT WITH MR. STRATTON AND MR. TAMIS, BUT HAD NO CONTACT WITH EITHER MR. MULL OR MRS. SCHRUMPF.

2. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH THE ROMANIAN OFFICIAL (MR. STOICA) WHO HANDLED THE ARRANGEMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE EMBASSY FOR SHIPPING THE REMAINS, STOICA STATED THAT THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT ASSUMES THE COST OF SHIPPING REMAINS OF PERSONS FROM OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE TOURISTS FROM OUTSIDE THAT GEOGRAPHIC AREA TRANSPORTED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT.

3. MR. STRATTON STATED THAT HE WILL LOOK INTO THE MATTER OF THE 3,200 LEI EXPENDED BY MR. TAMIS AND ADVISE US. STILL REMAINS IS THE PROBLEM OF CONVERTING THE LEI INTO AMERICAN DOLLARS SO THE MONEY CAN BE TURNED OVER TO MRS. SCHRUMPF. WE STILL ATTEMPT RESOLVE THIS MATTER LOCALLY.

4. THE EMBASSY WILL SEND COPIES OF THE RECEIPTED BILLS AND AN ITEMIZED LIST OF EXPENDITURES DIRECTLY TO MRS. SCHRUMPF. (AIR FARE \$1722.45; PREPARATION AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION \$429.91; MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES OF LOCAL FUNERAL DIRECTOR \$29.50).

5. FYI: AMBASSADORS FOR FRIENDSHIP IS AN AMERICAN COMMERCIAL FIRM WHICH ARRANGES CHARTER FLIGHTS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ROMANIA FOR AMATEUR SINGING GROUPS. UPON ARRIVAL IN ROMANIA, ONT ASSUMES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE GROUP, INCLUDING SETTING UP CONCERTS, ITINERARIES, AND LODGING. IN LIEU OF BEING PAID FOR THEIR SINGING PERFORMANCES, GROUP MEMBERS RECEIVE DISCOUNTS ON FOOD, LODGING, AND/OR TRAVEL DURING THEIR STAY IN ROMANIA. ONT IS A STATE-CONTROLLED ENTERPRISE FOR TOURISM OUTSIDE THE FORMAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: CULTURAL PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY ONT ARE NON-GOVERNMENTAL IN NATURE. BARNES

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